

# Report of the Medical Officer of Health to the Thirsk Rural Sanitary Authority for the Year 1894.

Gentlemen

In presenting my Report for the Year 1894, and taking note in it of the Sanitary Condition of the District at the end of the Year, it is so far satisfactory to be able to state, that although a wave of Zymotic Disease has passed over our area, it has not made an unfavourable impression upon the health of the population, so far at least as can be shown by the figures of the Deathrate, and as the epidemic had practically ceased before the close of the Year, sufficient time had been given to enable an estimate to be made.

There have been 186 Deaths during the Year, 90 being of Males and 96 of Females; which constitutes an Annual Deathrate of 15.26 per thousand of the population, according to the census of 1891, and there is no reason in the circumstances of the District to calculate upon any real increase of population, since that census was taken.

There have been 314 Births, registered during the Year, being an increase of Births over Deaths of 128, and constituting a Birthrate of 25.76 per thousand of the population.

The Mortality of Infants under one Year is 105.9 per thousand of the registered Births, but as no less than 39.3 per cent of the Deaths are a consequence of Premature Birth it considerably reduces the value of the Infant Mortality.







	Measles	Whooping Cough	Scarlatina	Typhoid	Erysipelas	Diphtheria	Croup	Total	Influenza	Rheumatic Fever
Thirsk	97	51	7	3	6	4	1	169	1	1
Sowerby	116	4	4	13	5	4	2	148		
Kirby Miske			3					3		
Newsham	2		1					3		
S. Hilwington				2				2		
C. Miniott	3	3			2	1		9		
Bagby			1					1		
Topcliffe			6				1	7	1	
Eldemire	1							1		
Hutton Lessay						1		1		
Fawdington						1		1		
Sutton		1						1		
Feliskirk	1							1		
Thirkleby	1							1		
Huayton	38		1	2	1			42	1	2
Th-le-Street	5							5		
Th-le-Moor			9					9		
Bolthby					1			1		
Howesby	3							3		
Hepwick	2							2		
Upsall	7							7		
Pickhill	55							55		
Sniderby	11							11		
Sniderby	7							7		
Holme	4							4		
Mannby			4					4		
	353	59	36	20	15	11	4	498		
Deaths	4	1		1	1	4	3	14	3	3







At the other extreme of life 31.70 of the total number of Deaths are of persons over 70 years of age; there being 34 Deaths between 70 and 80, 22 between 80 and 90, and 2 between 90 and 100 years.

498 Cases of Zymotic Diseases have been notified during the year. Of these 14 have been fatal, to which must be added 3 from Influenza and 3 from Acute Rheumatism not Notifiable but bringing up the total Mortality to 20, which constitutes a Zymotic Deathrate of 1.64 per thousand of the population.

Appended is a Table of the particular localities and incidence of the various Zymotics

## Table C

No case has been notified since Dec 11<sup>th</sup> up to the time of the preparation of this Report.

It may be considered especially fortunate that the Measles epidemic was practically over before the season or the weather became severe enough to induce the dangerous sequelae of this childhoods disease.

The Deaths which resulted from it being really chiefly of those unhealthy children to whose end it was only a proximate cause.

Owing to the prevalence of Measles, the Huayton School was closed from the 25<sup>th</sup> of June for four weeks.

The Thirk Infant School was closed from Sept 21<sup>st</sup> to Oct 15<sup>th</sup>.

The Sowerby Schools were closed from Oct 18<sup>th</sup> to Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>.

The Pickhill School was closed from Oct 23<sup>rd</sup> to November 19<sup>th</sup>.







Scarlatina. — A portion of the cases of this Disease was connected with the ending of the mild epidemic of last year; but in the end of October six cases occurred in Topcliffe, owing to a servant girl being brought home from her situation near Bedale when recovering from the Disease and before the nature of her illness had become known she communicated it to the members of her family. Isolation of any kind was impossible, but disinfection and cleansing were carried out effectually so far as the spread of the disease was concerned, as it was entirely confined to those immediately affected.

Diphtheria. — Of this Disease a fatal case occurred at Fawdington, the victim being a young lady who had just returned from London, apparently with the disease upon her.

Two cases appeared in a new house in Millgate Thirsk where all the sanitary arrangements seemed to be complete.

One case occurred in Bridge Street Thirsk where some large and old ashpits imperfectly cleaned out seemed to be the proximate evil.

These have been improved.

One case in Four Horse Shoes Yard proved fatal, the complete blocking of a drain on the premises in the immediate vicinity being an apparently sufficient cause. This drain was thoroughly opened out and repaired.

One case in a farmer followed the examination and cleaning out of a sink or small cesspool on his premises near Sutton.







One case near the Maltkilus and one in Hutton Lessay had no apparent local cause.

One case in Cross Keys Yard Thirsk occurred in a cottage near to which is a large ashpit and sink which were imperfectly cleansed but are now improved.

One case in Sowerby seemed to have had its origin in the unsanitary condition of the conveniences on the premises. These offices have been reconstructed and the ashpit covered.

Another case in Sowerby appeared to have an overfilled ashpit as its only local reason.

Typhoid.— In the end of 1893, cases of this disease were reported in South Hilwington, Thirsk and Little Sowerby and in the beginning of 1894 two other cases appeared in connection with the Barker family in South Hilwington who were first attacked.

Then three cases occurred in one family in Sowerby, where the condition of the watersupply and drainage of the premises had only quite recently been attended to.

Three cases occurred in Little Sowerby while the improvements there were yet unfinished.

One man in Sowerby came from Stockton with the disease upon him.

One case occurred in the Thirsk Post Office, where the drainage was good and the Thirsk Watersupply laid on.

Two cases appeared in one family in Huayton where the watersupply was good but where the ashpit and privy arrangement was very defective. These defects were remedied at once.







One case appeared in Chapel Street Thirsk where the common ashpit was very large, old, and too near the dwellings. The suggested improvements in these offices were carried out at once.

One case in Norby was that of a young man who became ill after being engaged in some vault or grave opening operations at Siltou. His home surroundings were in good sanitary condition.

In the Autumn five cases occurred in one house in Sowerby, the disease having been introduced by a visitor from York who had come with the disease upon him. The house is a new one, the drainage good and the Thirsk water supply in use.

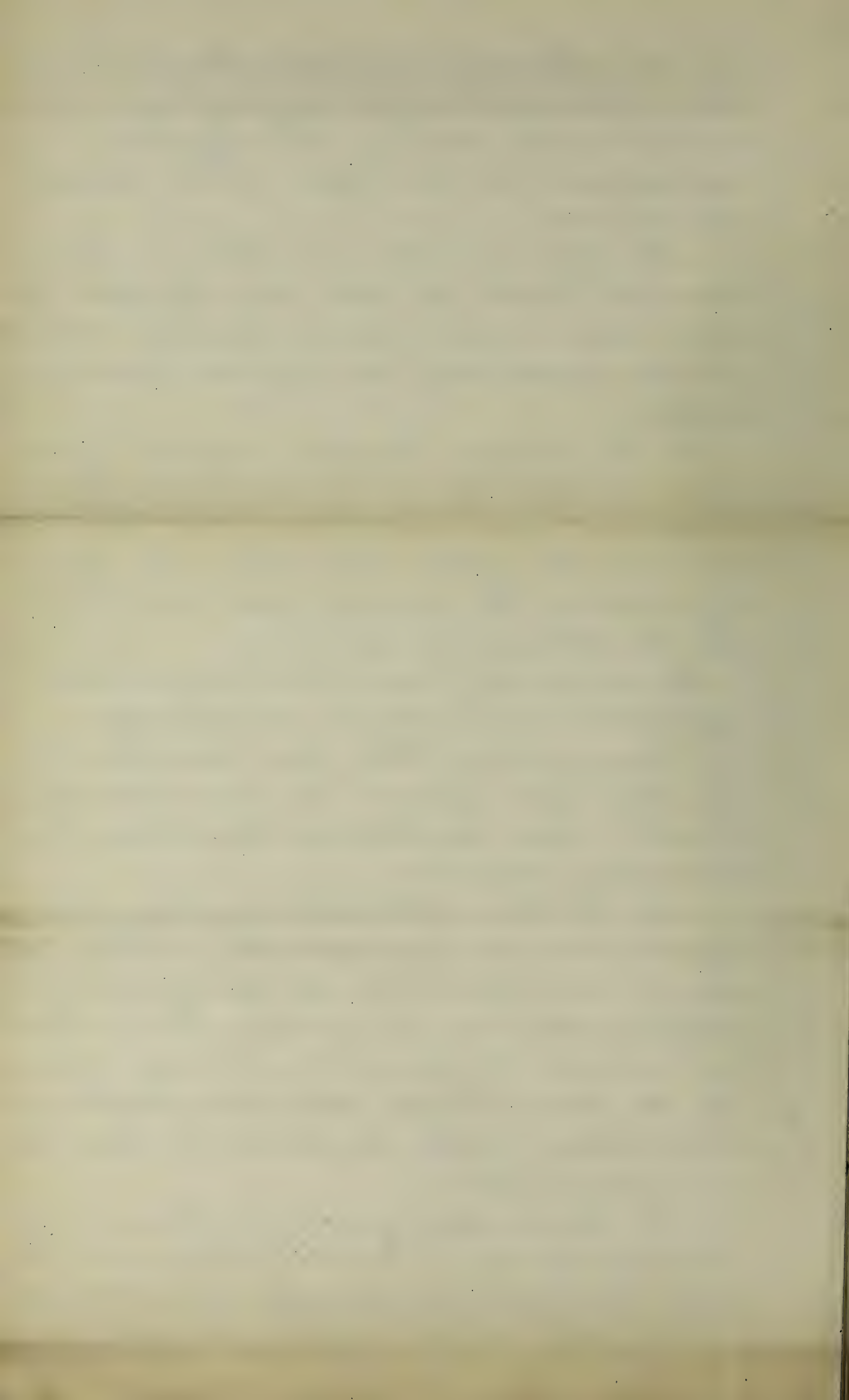
One anomalous case of continued fever appeared to have <sup>had</sup> its origin in Influenza.

Examination of these fever cases leads to the belief that infection has had as much to do with a large proportion of them as any local unsanitary conditions.

In the houses of the poor anything like effective isolation is impossible. That can only be accomplished by the agency of properly equipped Isolation or Infectious Diseases Hospitals, and I trust the time is not distant, under the new order of things, when such establishments shall become legally imperative in every Local Sanitary District.

The introduction of a large measure of notification into a District without at the same time providing some efficient means of checking the diseases notified, is much like the







sending of an army into the field unprovided with either powder or shot.

Concerning the local conditions generally underlying the appearance of diseases attributable to insanitation, it can only be repeated that defective sinks and drains in the vicinity of dwellings, large uncovered imperfectly emptied ashpits and privies, and leaky connections with leaky sewers, comprise the bulk of the matters requiring the practical attention of the Local Authority.

And until they enforce to the utmost the powers placed in their hands to remedy these conditions wherever found, or to see that they are remedied by those responsible for the evils, they are only putting a plaster on a gangrenous wound when they think to destroy the evil by the perfunctory process of closing a well, when the conditions that make that well a danger remain untouched.

Apart from the inquiries rendered necessary by the appearance of Zymotic Diseases in the different localities twenty-two general inspections of other parts of the District have been made by the Medical Officer during the Year: And the Nuisance Inspector reports on his special duties as follows

- 75 Ashpits have been cleaned out
- 90 Privies cleaned out
- 35 Ashpits have been covered and Cemented
- 34 Middens &c have been removed
- 24 Private drains have been attended to
- 12 Main drains have been attended to
- 17 Water supplies have been attended to







Cases of Fever and Infectious Diseases  
attended to, supplied with disinfectants  
and fumigated and Houses disinfected  
when necessary.

Respect

W. Buchanan. M.D.  
Med. Off. of Health  
Thurs 1<sup>st</sup> Feb. 1895.



